# LANDMARK DESIGNATION REPORT

# Holden Block

## 1027 West Madison Street

**Preliminary and Final Landmark Recommendation Adopted by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks, March 3, 2011**

**CITY OF CHICAGO**
**Richard M. Daley, Mayor**

**Department of Housing and Economic Development**
**Andrew J. Mooney, Commissioner**

**Bureau of Planning and Zoning**
**Historic Preservation Division**

**Cover: The Holden Block at 1027 W. Madison St. is a four-story commercial loft building built in 1872. It is designed in the Italianate architectural style, faced with Buena Vista sandstone, and ornamented with a plethora of finely-crafted stone ornament concentrated around upper-floor windows.**

*The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. The Commission is responsible for recommending to the City Council which individual buildings, sites, objects, or districts should be designated as Chicago Landmarks, which protects them by law.*

*The landmark designation process begins with a staff study and a preliminary summary of information related to the potential designation criteria. The next step is a preliminary vote by the Landmarks Commission as to whether the proposed landmark is worthy of consideration. This vote not only initiates the formal designation process, but it places the review of city permits for the property under the jurisdiction of the Commission until a final landmark recommendation is acted on by the City Council.*

*This Landmark Designation Report is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within a designation ordinance adopted by the City Council should be regarded as final.*

# HOLDEN BLOCK

## 1027 West Madison Street

**Built:** **1872**
**Architect:** **Stephen Vaughn Shipman**

The Holden Block, a four-story building located on Chicago's Near West Side, is an unusual-surviving Italianate "commercial block" from the 1870s. Also commonly known as a commercial loft building, this property type was once the standard building block of Chicago's commercial streets in the 19th and early 20th centuries, both downtown and along neighborhood commercial streets. Most Italianate-style examples from the 1860s and 1870s in Chicago have been lost through demolition and redevelopment; relatively few significant examples remain. A number of these, including the Washington Block at Washington and Wells Streets and the Haskell-Barker-Atwater Buildings at 18-28 S. Wabash Ave., are designated Chicago Landmarks. The Holden Block is arguably the finest surviving example on the Near West Side and one of the best citywide in its overall architectural design and detailing.

Immensely popular throughout the United States in the latter half of the nineteenth century, the Italianate architectural style was loosely based on Italian country villa architecture and the picturesque use of classically-influenced ornament, and the style exemplifies the Victorian love of ornament. The Holden Block's handsome street façade is clad with "Buena Vista stone," an Ohio-quarried sandstone popular during the 1870s for its fine-grained composition that allowed for crisply-edged carved ornament. The building's upper-floor windows are a master class in Italianate-style ornamental window surrounds, with eight different patterns for just 24 windows.

The Holden Block was built by Chicago real-estate developer and politician Charles C. P. Hol-

den during a time of intense real-estate development on the Near West Side immediately after the Chicago Fire of 1871. The Fire's devastation of downtown Chicago and the Near North Side, coupled with the Near West Side remaining largely untouched, encouraged much new residential and commercial building construction, including the Holden Block, as fire refugees needed to move both their homes and businesses following the Fire.

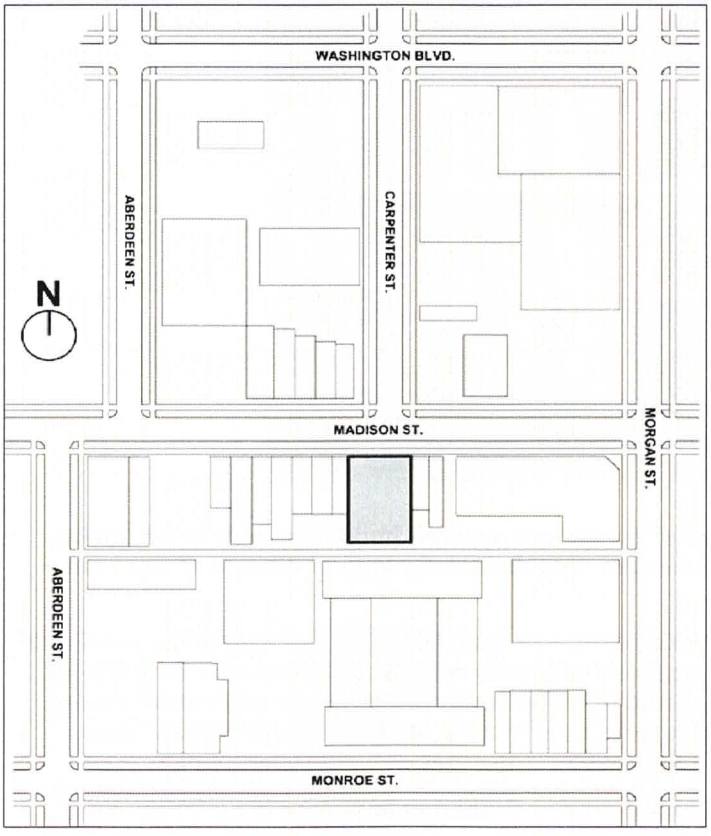
Holden's public-service career is also noteworthy. He was a City of Chicago alderman from 1862 to 1872. During his tenure, he was closely involved with the expansion of the City's drinking water supply, including the construction of the first water-supply tunnel under Lake Michigan. From 1870 to 1872, Holden served as City Council President. Due to his office, he was a prominent public official during the Chicago Fire of 1872, taking charge of the City's relief efforts and later writing a historically-significant account of the Fire and its aftermath. Serving from 1869 to 1878, Holden was also a member of the West Parks Commission, which built and operated parks on Chicago's West Side. He was elected to the Board of the Cook County Board of Commissioners in 1874 and became its president in 1876.

## BUILDING CONSTRUCTION AND DESCRIPTION

The Holden Block is located on the south side of West Madison Street midway between Morgan and Aberdeen streets on Chicago's Near West Side. The building serves as a visual "punctuation" for the vista south along Carpenter Street, which dead-ends at Madison in front of the Holden Block. Madison west of the Chicago River developed as a commercial street in the nineteenth century with rows of masonry "commercial blocks," also known as commercial loft buildings. Most of these 19th-century buildings have been demolished and replaced with either early 20th-century loft manufacturing buildings or late 20th-century mixed-use buildings.

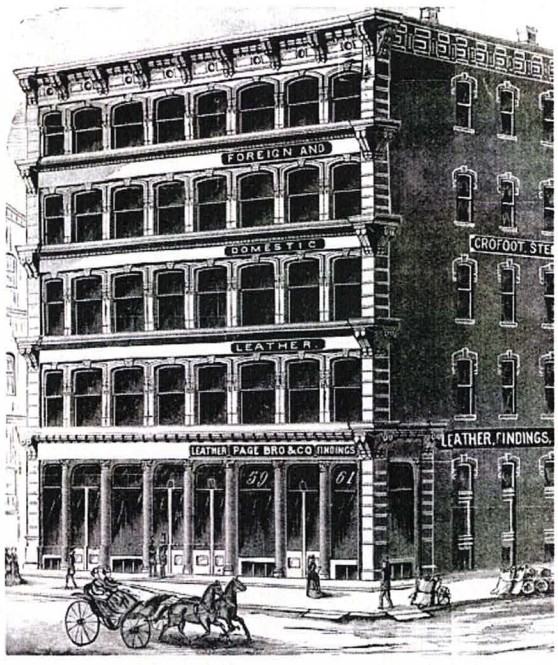
The Holden Block is one of the oldest buildings on West Madison west of downtown, having been erected shortly after the Chicago Fire of 1871. Charles C. P. Holden took out a building permit for a "four-story and basement brick building" on June 20, 1872. It was to be built with a "handsomely dressed front and contain two double stores." The *Chicago Tribune* reported on June 30, 1872, that the façade would be adorned in "Buena Vista stone, which is now the most admired in the city." Buena Vista stone was a type of sandstone quarried in Ohio and popular for building construction in the late nineteenth century. The article further stated that "the [building's] stories are high, well lighted and ventilated, and eminently adapted for a first class store."

The Holden Block is sited on a 72-foot x 100-foot lot, and is built up to all property lines. The front façade (north, facing Madison) is the only façade that is decorative in appearance, with a finely- finished cladding in pale-yellow Buena Vista sandstone. Two large glass-enclosed storefronts flank the building's centrally-placed, upper-floor entrance. Above this entrance, the building's central bay is given greater visual emphasis with pairs of round-arched windows on each floor, set between slightly-projecting rusticated and incised piers. This structural bay is flanked by sets of three single, originally double-hung windows on each floor. All of these windows are finely-detailed with carved and incised stone surrounds. The roof parapet at the top of the building's central bay is ornamented with a carved stone nameplate inscribed, "1872 C.C.P. Holden."




**Above: The Holden Block is a four-story brick commercial loft building with pale-yellow sandstone cladding the street façade. It was built in 1872 when the Near West Side was rapidly developing in the wake of the Chicago Fire of 1871.**

**Left: The building (highlighted) is located at 1027 W. Madison St. North Carpenter Street dead-ends in front of the building, providing a vista of the building from the north.**



**Chicago once had many "commercial blocks," or commercial loft buildings, built in the 1870s and lining its commercial streets. Most have been demolished. Several of those that have survived are designated Chicago landmarks.**

**Top left: The Washington Block at 40 N. Wells Street was built in 1873-74. Designed by Frederick and Edward Baumann, its sandstone façade features ornate window hoods similar to those on the Holden Block. Top right: The Page Brothers Building features one of the city's last two remaining cast-iron façades. When the building was built in 1872, its Lake Street façade faced downtown Chicago's long-time, principal retail street.**

**Bottom: Built in 1875 and 1877, the Atwater and Barker Buildings look over the L tracks on South Wabash Avenue.**

The building's side facades (east and west), which share party walls with adjacent buildings, are built of common brick and are plain and utilitarian in visual character. The rear wall (south, facing the alley) is also built of common brick and is plain and functional, with a loading dock and other garage-type openings on the ground floor and simply-detailed, segmental-arched window openings on upper floors.

The building's interior currently consists of open, unfinished loft space on each floor. A load-bearing masonry wall in the center of the building effectively separates the building's interior into two sections. Cast-iron columns on the first floor have handsomely-detailed Corinthian capitals.

In 1894 a gas explosion and fire destroyed the interior of the west section of the Holden Block and the west and south walls. Architect John M. Van Osdel completed plans for rebuilding the entire west section while retaining the original stone façade.

## COMMERCIAL BLOCKS IN 1870S CHICAGO

As Chicago grew relentlessly in the post-Civil War period, high land values encouraged increasingly high-density real-estate development in Chicago's downtown. This was manifested in the construction of continuous rows of multi-story commercial blocks, or commercial loft buildings. Rectilinear in shape and plan, these buildings were built of brick, sometimes clad with stone, and were built lot line to lot line with shared party walls. Most had only one street façade, which received finely-detailed storefront, window and roofline ornamentation in the fashionable styles of the day, including Italianate, Classical Revival, French Renaissance and English Gothic.

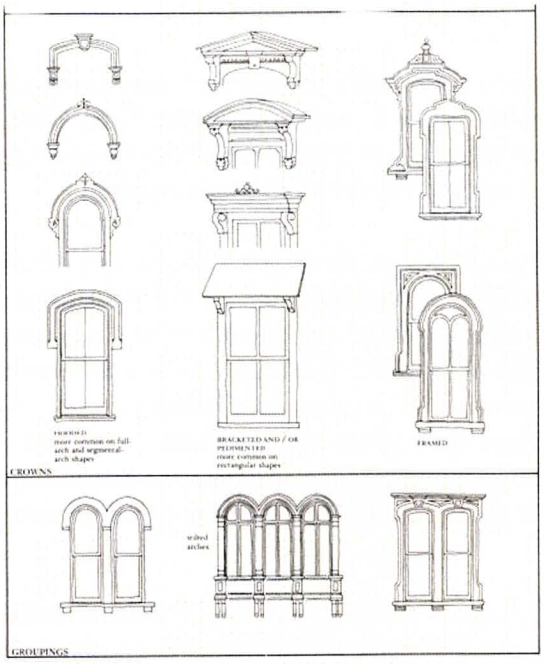
The commercial block was a property type that allowed for great flexibility of use. Ground-floor stores with large display windows could be paired with a variety of upper-floor uses. Separate entries and stairs provided access to upper-floor showrooms, light-manufacturing workrooms, storage space, offices or residential spaces such as hotel rooms or apartments.

The Chicago Fire of October, 1871, destroyed downtown Chicago, the North Side up to Fullerton Ave. (the city's then-northern border), and some relatively small portions of the Near South and Near West Sides. Almost immediately, reconstruction began to occur within the fire zone, and the commercial block, with its ease of construction and spatial flexibility, was a common property type in the city's reconstruction, both downtown and in close-in Chicago neighborhoods. Downtown itself was rebuilt much as it had been, only often larger in scale, with four- to six-story commercial blocks lining street after street. Increasingly, similar types of businesses clustered together, with retail stores lining State and Wabash and office buildings fronting onto Dearborn and LaSalle.

Within just six weeks after the Fire had consumed Chicago's entire downtown, between October 10 through November 24, 1871, 318 permanent stone and brick buildings were constructed in the "burnt district." These first buildings were remarkably plain, as their builders were concerned more with expediency than style. It wasn't until spring of 1872 that architects were able

**Right: The Delaware Building, designed by Wheelock and Thomas in 1874, is an excellent example of an Italianate-style commercial block that remains in Chicago's Loop. The tall windows are treated with round and square crowns with keystones, and there is an elaborate cornice at the top. The building is a designated Chicago landmark.**

**Below left: Drawings of typical Italianate-style windows illustrate the use of U-shaped hoods and pedimented crowns, often with brackets. Below right: Drake's Block, which once stood at the southeast corner of Wabash and Washington streets, is a representative example of the many Italianate-style commercial blocks that have been demolished during the last roughly 140 years.**



to offer more elaborately-designed work. In promoting their high quality as construction materials, Athens Marble and Buena Vista Stone were often noted in building announcements.

Only a few of these 1872 buildings are still standing, notably the Page Brothers Building at 177-181 N. State St., designed by John M. Van Osdel, and the White Building at 229-231 W. Lake St., designed by Burling and Adler. These two architectural firms are considered among Chicago's most prominent pioneering architects. The Page Brothers Building is an individually-designated Chicago Landmark, while the White Building is a contributing building to the Lake-Franklin Group of post-Fire commercial loft buildings.

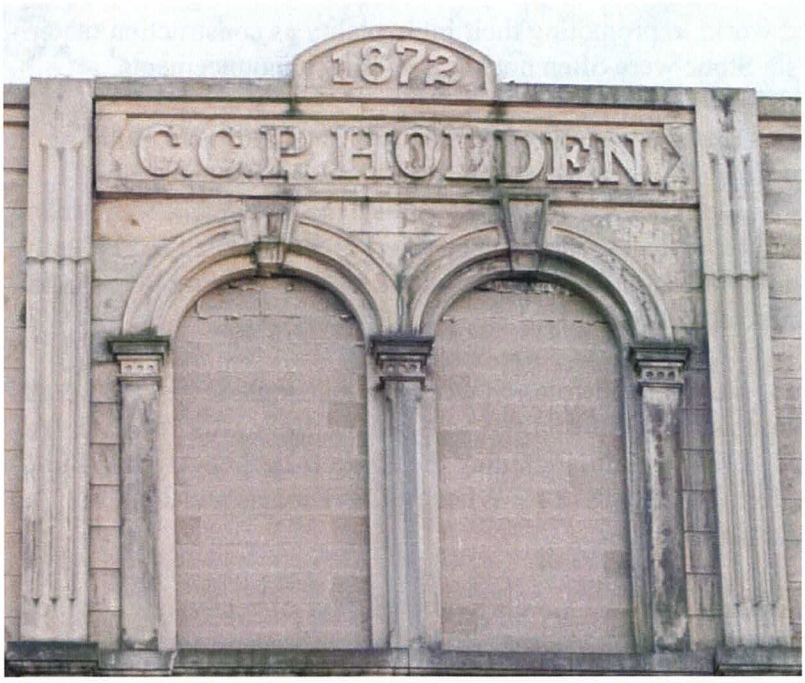
During the next few years, the Loop saw the construction of additional small-scale commercial blocks similar in size and decoration as those built in the year immediately after the Fire. Although most have been demolished, a few remain, including the Haskell-Barker-Atwater Buildings at 18-28 S. Wabash Ave., built in 1875 to 1877 by Wheelock & Thomas and John M. Van Osdel (all designated Chicago Landmarks.)

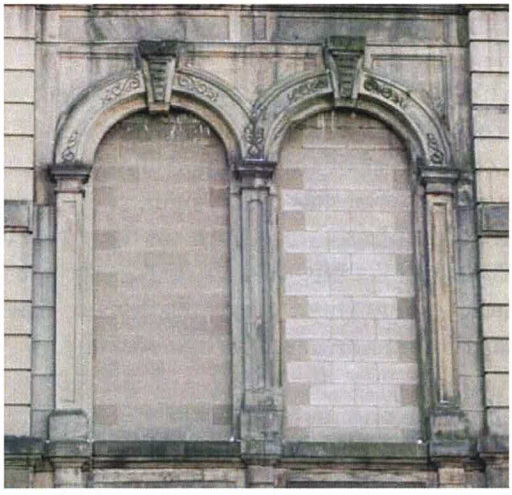
Outside downtown, formerly-modest commercial streets saw an influx of real-estate development that transformed them with commercial blocks that sheltered a mix of businesses serving neighborhood residents. The 400- and 500-blocks of North Clark St. retain a number of commercial blocks — some clad in stone — that were built in the years after the Fire.

Although the Chicago Fire originated west of the Chicago River in what was then called the West Division, only a small section of the Near West Side, east of Jefferson Street, was affected. West of the Chicago River, West Madison Street had been spared, and it became a refuge for businesses and residents. Within just one year after the fire, over 88 substantial brick or stone buildings were built on the Near West Side. Another street that experienced this type of commercial construction in the early 1870s was Milwaukee Avenue on the Near Northwest Side. A few small concentrations of 1870s-era structures remain there, particularly from Hubbard Street north to Chicago Avenue.

The scale and architectural detailing of these characteristic 1870s commercial blocks gave their streets a visual coherence and elegance that would not last long. As the nineteenth century came to a close, the explosive growth of Chicago, coupled with new building technologies, allowed for the construction of much taller structures. Within just 20 years of their erection, these smaller-scale 1870s-era buildings in downtown Chicago were being replaced with new skyscrapers. Continued development pressure throughout the 20th century, both downtown and in many outlying neighborhood, spared few of this once-common building type.

The *Chicago Historic Resources Survey* identified approximately 50 masonry commercial buildings that were believed to date from the early 1870s. They were found largely in the Near North, Loop, Near West Side, and West Town community areas. Of these, 43 were identified as being designed in the Italianate style, but only 14 have stone facades like the Holden Block. Among these, one of the most interesting and intact is at 1357 N. Wells St. in Old Town from 1875. Two are on the Near Northwest Side at 1184 and 1327 N. Milwaukee Ave.. Six of them are grouped on either side of the 400-block of North Clark St. in the River North neighborhood, while others are scattered elsewhere.





**The Holden Block is lavishly detailed with carved stone ornament in the Italianate style. There are eight different window surrounds for just 24 window openings, remarkable for a relatively small structure. Top left: Although the cornice is missing, the nameplate with C. C. P. Holden 1872 remains at the fourth floor in the center bay. Top right: This stone ornament is found at the base of the center-bay windows on the second floor. Right: The center bay of the third floor repeats the round-arched, paired windows. Bottom right: The side bay of the second floor displays two different lintel designs.**

**A few of the varied window surrounds in the Holden Block are shown here. Top: Round-arched paired windows with keystones from the center bay of the second floor. Left: Segmental-arched window with key-stone from the side bay of the second floor. Bottom left: Segmental-arched window with crown from the side bay of the third floor. Bottom right: Flat window with rounded corners from the side bay of the fourth floor.**

## COMMERCIAL BLOCKS AND THE ITALIANATE STYLE

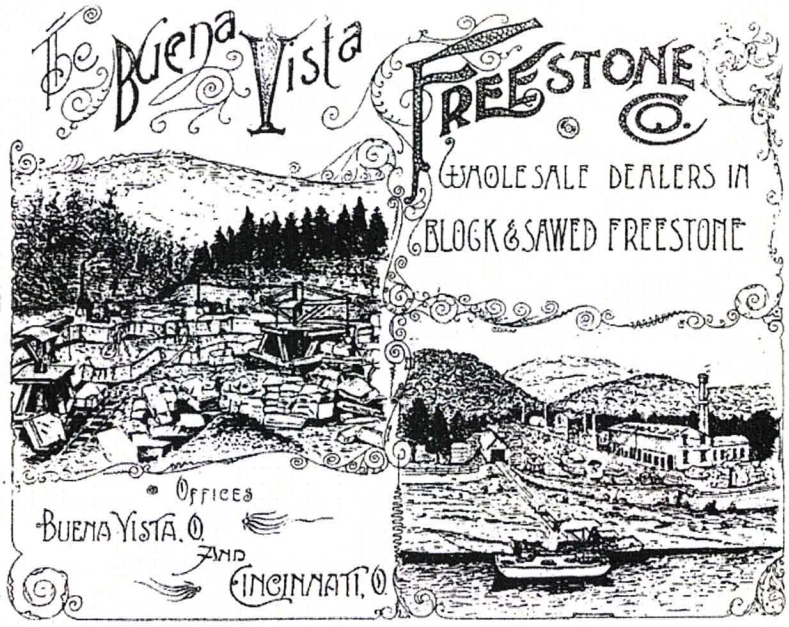
The Holden Block is an excellent example of an Italianate-style commercial loft building, also often referred to as a commercial block. The Italianate style was popular in the United States from 1860 to 1885 just as the commercial block was emerging as a common building type for urban commercial streets. Dominating Chicago architecture after the fire, the Italianate style appealed to designers who were interpreting architectural precedents in a romantic rather than a literal way. The style was loosely based on the Italian country villa and grew as a reaction to the formal classical ideals that had dominated art and architecture for 150 years.

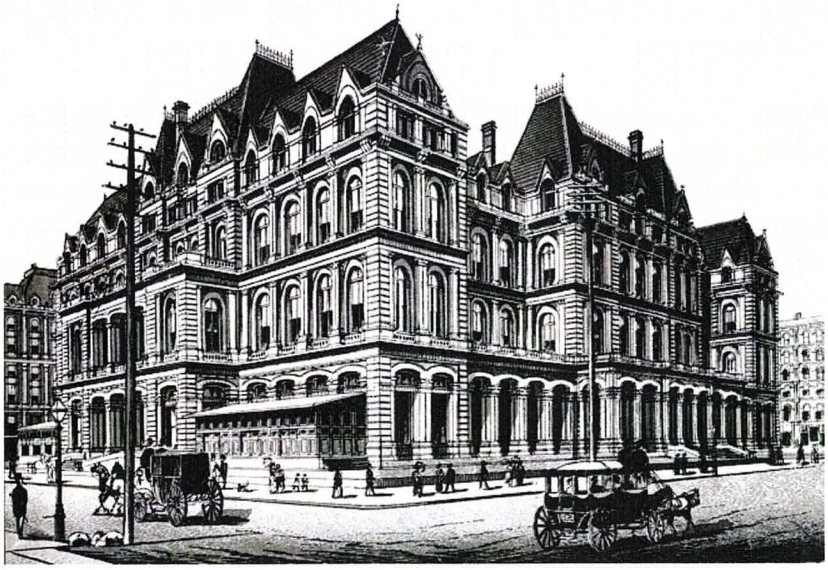
Although the Italianate style is often used for free-standing houses and row houses, it was also commonly used in cities such as Chicago for commercial blocks. Both commercial blocks and row houses, although different in use, had similar rectilinear, box-like building shapes, with close proximity to neighboring buildings through the use of party walls; the use of decoration around windows and doors and along rooflines enhanced street-facing facades. In Italianate-style buildings, paired brackets typically ornament elaborately detailed cornices. Tall narrow windows, topped by decorative stone lintels, often with incised floral medallions, can be found in many shapes. Round-arched window lintels may have keystones, while segmental-arched tops commonly have u-shaped hoods, often with brackets. Some flat-topped windows with rounded corners may also have crowns, while others can be pedimented, reflecting classical Renaissance palaces. Windows may appear singly or can be grouped in pairs or triples.

With its design emphasis on windows and cornices applied to a flat façade, the Italianate style became very adaptable to the flat facades of the commercial block. Its popularity for commercial structures was further enhanced by its historic association with the merchant princes of Florence and Venice.

When the Holden Block was built in 1872, the Italianate style was the style of the day in Chicago. The architectural treatment of the building's ornate stone façade on floors two through four is exceptional. For a seemingly simple, flat-fronted, mid-block building, the composition and decorative expression is complex and varied. The facade displays several of the major Italianate-style window designs, in singles and in pairs. There are eight different window surrounds for just 24 window openings, remarkable for a relatively small structure. The 24 windows are arranged with a pair in the center bay and three single window openings on either side bay. The elaborate stone window surrounds, keystones, and incised lintels are most complex on the second floor, becoming simpler on the third and simplest on the fourth, where the windows are slightly shorter. This simplification as one gazes up the facade is echoed by the stone façade itself, which has deep grooves between the stone blocks on the second floor and a smoother stone surface on the upper floors.

The windows in the center bays on each floor are paired, and have round arched tops with keystones. The lintels on the second floor windows are most ornate, with three-part keystones and delineated stone blocks in the pilasters and curves of the arch. Those on the third floor center bay are simpler in design, with smaller keystones and the arches themselves are incised. Those on the fourth floor center bay have the smallest keystones and no incised ornament.



**Top: This historic advertisement for Buena Vista stone illustrates quarries that opened as early as the 1850s. Only one quarry providing the stone remains in the southern part of Ohio along the Ohio River. Middle: Buena Vista stone was used for the Cook County Post Office and Customhouse, designed by John M. Van Osdel in 1879. Left: When the customhouse was demolished just 16 years later, the stone was shipped on 500 rail cars to Milwaukee, Wisconsin, and reused at the Basilica of St. Josaphat, completed in 1901.**

Window openings on the second and third floors on either side of the center bay have segmental arched tops. On the second and third floors there is a similar pattern within each grouping of three window openings. The window in the middle of the three has a more detailed window hood with a distinguishable cornice, although the specific design differs slightly between the two floors. Those on either side of the center match in style, but are also slightly different between the two floors. The flanking window openings in each bay on the second floor have a molded lintel with three-part keystone. The flanking window openings in each bay on the third floor have an incised lintel with smaller keystone, and engaged pilasters. The six window openings in the side window bays of the fourth floor are all identical, with flat tops with rounded corners; the stone lintels have keystones and incised ornament.

## BUENA VISTA STONE IN LATE 19TH-CENTURY CHICAGO

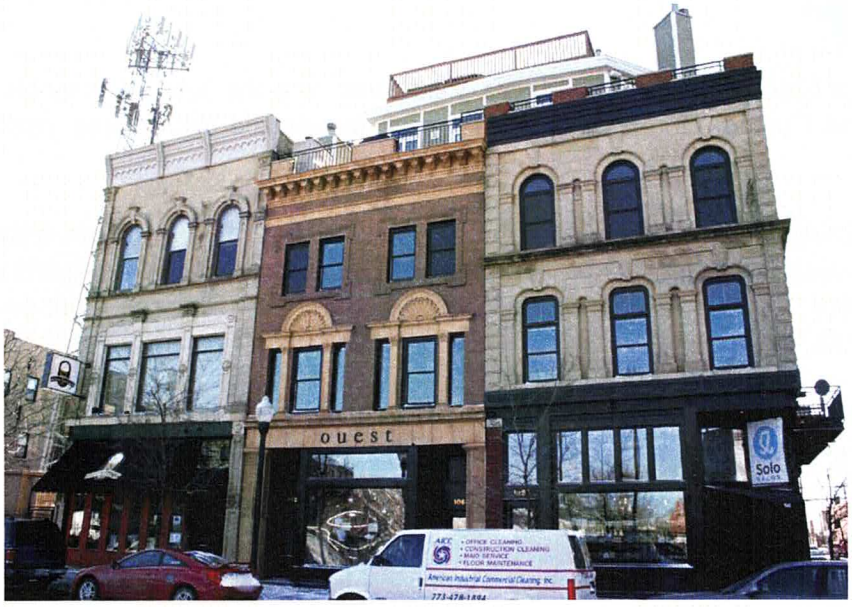
The Holden Block is handsomely designed with a front façade clad with an Ohio-quarried sandstone known as "Buena Vista stone." The use of Buena Vista stone for the Holden Block was highlighted in all the press reports of the day. The first *Chicago Tribune* announcement on June 30, 1872, called it "now the most admired in the city and which will enter into the composition of very many of our largest buildings."

Cut stone became a popular building material after the Chicago Fire for both practical and aesthetic reasons. Stone added stability and durability to buildings and their foundations, and had insulating benefits. It was also an attractive alternative to the brick structures of the early nineteenth century. Sandstone and limestone were the most commonly-used types of stone in Chicago. Sandstone such as Buena Vista came chiefly from Ohio, while dolomite limestone from Joliet or Lemont, Illinois, was sometimes marketed as "Athens Marble." The use of Joliet limestone declined by the late 1880s as signs of deterioration in older buildings became evident.

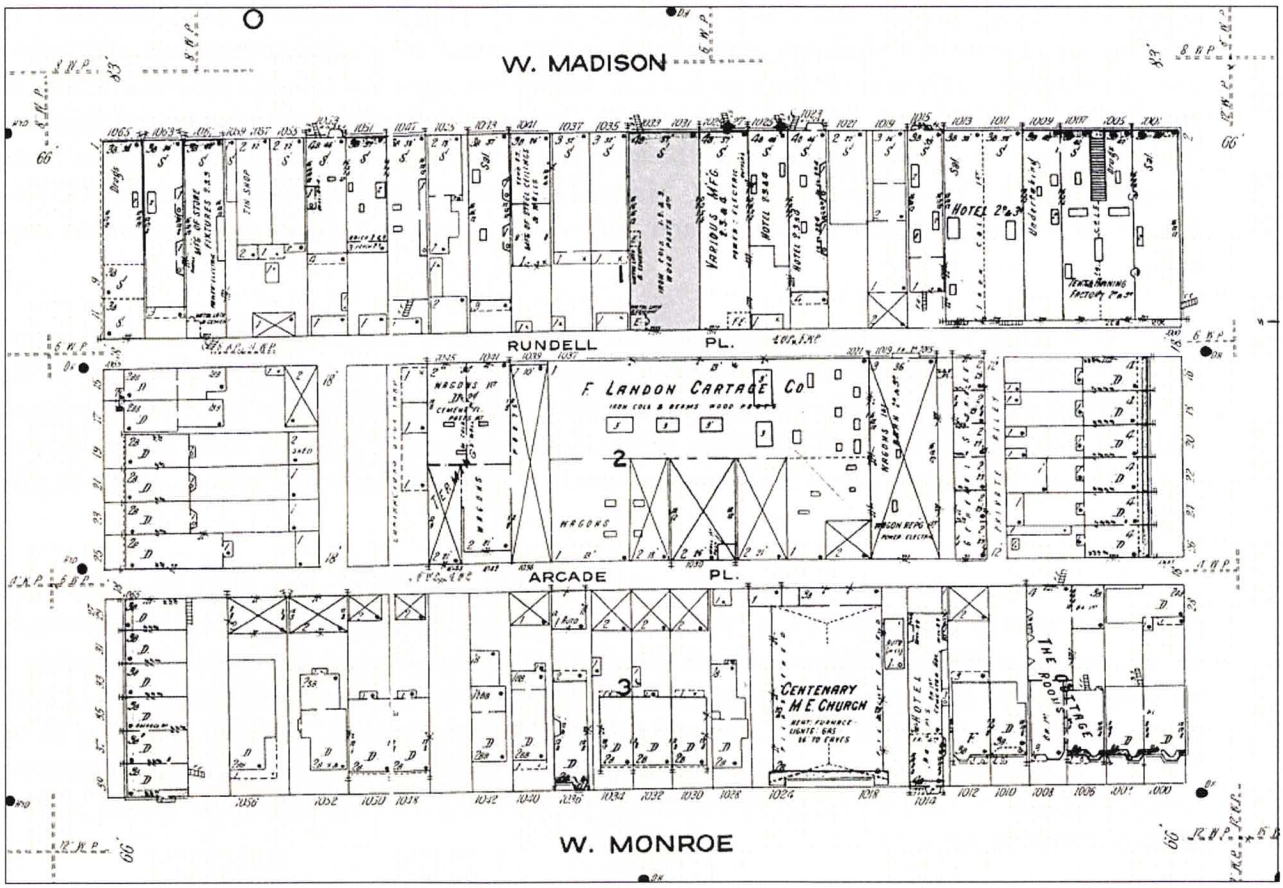
The technical name for Buena Vista stone is the Buena Vista Member of the Cuyahoga Formation, found near Portsmouth, Ohio, in Adams, Scioto, and Pike counties. Although Buena Vista is often known as sandstone, it is technically siltstone that has a finer grain than sandstone. The beds where it is quarried are homogenous, with no visible differences in grain size or sedimentary structures. Because this type of stone can be cut in any direction, it is also sometimes referred to as "freestone." Trace fossils are common near the tops of the stone beds. It is this fine grain and uniformity which gained Buena Vista stone its high-quality reputation.

Buena Vista was one of the earliest classic rocks quarried in the hills above the Ohio River and along the route of the Ohio & Erie Canal. The first stone was taken as loose blocks from the hills along the Ohio River near the town of Buena Vista and used for a house built in 1814. By 1831 a quarry had been established, and stone was being rafted downriver to Cincinnati. First exported to southwestern Ohio cities along the river and canal system, rail transport extended its use to Illinois, Michigan, and elsewhere after 1850. More quarries were opened in the 1850s, with peak operation through the 1870s. But by the early 1900s most of the quarries had closed. It continues to be quarried today by the Walter Brothers Stone Company in McDermott, Ohio.

The Buena Vista stone used in Illinois typically came from the McDermott quarry. One of the




**Top: Bsides the Holden Block two other early 1870s buildings on the Near West Side remain on W. Madison St. The Glacins Block at 1061 W. Madison (far left) was built the same year as the Holden Block. The stone-clad commercial block at 1065 W. Madison (far right) was built a few years later. Between these buildings, the brick-and-terra cotta building at 1063 W. Madison was built in 1896. Bottom: Later in the development of the Near West Side, the 1917 Sanborn map shows the 1000-block of West Madison Street fully developed with commercial structures. The Holden Block is highlighted.**



more prominent structures in Chicago made from Buena Vista stone was the John M. Van Osdel-designed Post Office and Custom House built in 1879 and demolished just sixteen years later.

In the 20th century the building stone of choice in Chicago became Bedford limestone from Indiana quarries near Bloomington, Indiana. This limestone is considered the highest-quality limestone in the United States. Once it became readily available, it quickly replaced more porous sandstones such as Buena Vista.

## THE HOLDEN BLOCK AND NEAR WEST SIDE DEVELOPMENT IN THE 19TH CENTURY

The original 1830 plat of Chicago by surveyor James Thompson laid out a frontier town that extended west from Lake Michigan to the future location of Des Plaines St., and from Kinzie Street on the north to Madison Street on the south. West of the Chicago River, small wood-frame cottages sprang up as early as 1837 in what would become the Near West Side community area. The city was incorporated that year with a municipal boundary that went south to 22nd St. and west to Wood Street, encompassing the future location of the Holden Block.

The late 1840s through the 1860s saw much growth on the Near West Side. Two train depots—the Chicago Galena and Union station, built at Halsted and Kinzie in 1848, and the Union Depot at Canal and Madison, constructed in 1860—and associated commercial and industrial development attracted workers to the area and encouraged the subsequent construction of small-scale working-class cottages occupied by German, Irish, and Scandinavian immigrants. The site where the Holden Block would be built in 1871—Block 1 of the Canal Trustees' Subdivision, bounded by Madison, Monroe, Morgan and Aberdeen—was subdivided in 1853, although development during the 1850s and early 1860s appears to have been somewhat sporadic.

A strong impetus for high-quality development came in 1864, when former Kentuckian Samuel A. Walker started a real estate development along Ashland Avenue, a few blocks west of the future Holden Block site, that catered to the wealthy. Large mansions were built along Ashland and east along Washington Blvd. Other streets such as Monroe, Adams, and Jackson east of Ashland saw the construction of somewhat smaller, yet well-built and styled, single-family houses.

Area development blossomed in the wake of the 1871 Chicago Fire. The Near West Side was almost completely untouched by the fire's destruction, and the neighborhood's close proximity to downtown brought an influx of both commercial and residential development, creating a building boom in the years immediately after the Fire. It was in response to this increased real-estate demand that Charles C. P. Holden built the Holden Block at 1027 W. Madison St. in 1872. The building was one of fifteen brick and stone commercial buildings to be constructed along Madison in 1872 along an eleven-block stretch from Des Plaines Street on the east to Throop Street on the west.

**Top left: Colonel Shipman, the architect of the Holden Block, in his Civil War uniform. Top right and bottom: The American Exchange Bank in Madison, Wisconsin, designed by Shipman and built just a year before the Holden Block, has similar Italianate-style features.**

Shipman moved to Chicago in 1871 and designed a number of buildings in the city along with the Holden Block.

Top right: Shipman designed the Presbyterian Hospital in 1888 (seen here in an historic postcard). Still standing on West Congress Street, the building has been greatly altered with the removal of the original towers and the addition of three floors. Middle left: Stone ornament remains visible at the building's base. Middle right: This Shipman design on West Warren Blvd. shows the application of the Italianate style to an urban town house. Tall windows have stone crowns with rosettes while the cornice has paired brackets. Bottom: The manufacturing loft buildings at 10-20 W. Hubbard St. were built in 1883.

By the mid-1880s, Madison had become a densely built-up commercial street, while adjacent streets were lined with a mix of single-family houses, churches, and small retail buildings. Much of this 19th-century development has disappeared in the many decades since. The portion of the Near West Side east of Ashland became largely commercial and light-industrial in the early 20th century, and large-scale loft/manufacturing buildings replaced many earlier buildings, both residential and commercial. Madison Street itself became the location of many single-room-occupancy hotels. In the post-World War II period, demolition created large gaps in the neighborhood's streetscapes, which have largely been filled in with new residential and commercial development in the last twenty years.

Along with the Holden Block, a handful of 1870s-era commercial loft buildings remain along Madison, exemplifying the street's post-Fire era of commercial development. These include three small commercial blocks at 1061, 1063 and 1065 W. Madison St. The Holden Block, with its larger scale and finer, more varied ornamentation, is the best-remaining 1870s-era commercial block that exemplifies this 19th-century period of Near West Side development.

## ARCHITECT STEPHEN V. SHIPMAN

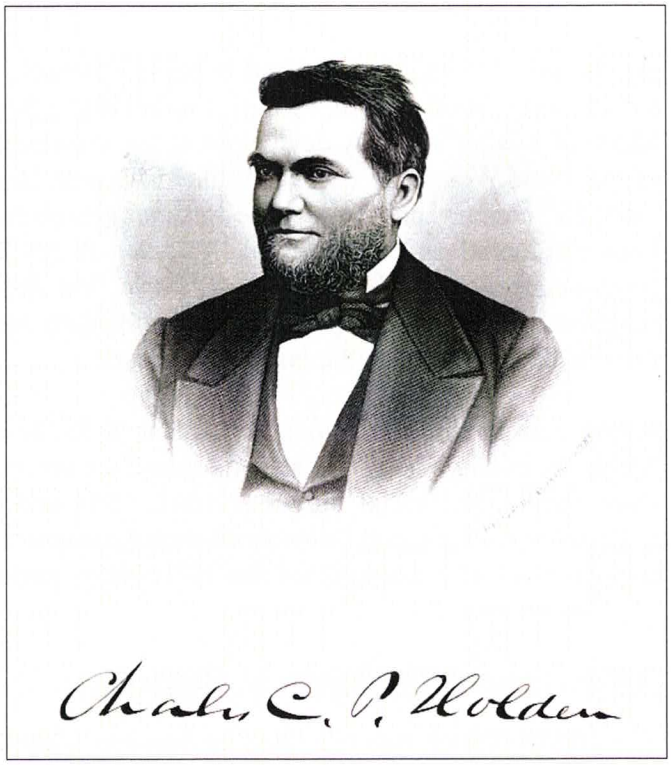
The Holden Block was designed by Stephen Vaughan Shipman (1825-1905), an architect who practiced architecture in Pennsylvania and Madison, Wisconsin, before continuing his profession in Chicago from 1871 until his death in 1905. Shipman was born in Montrose, Pennsylvania, and worked first in the printing business. He then studied architecture, and with his father who was a builder designed and supervised the construction of public and private buildings in Pittsburgh and Philadelphia. He moved to Madison, Wisconsin, in 1855 where he was appointed architect of the Central Wisconsin State Hospital for the Insane. His architectural practice was interrupted by the Civil War when he accepted a commission as a first lieutenant in the 1st Wisconsin Voluntary Cavalry, later earning the rank of Colonel.

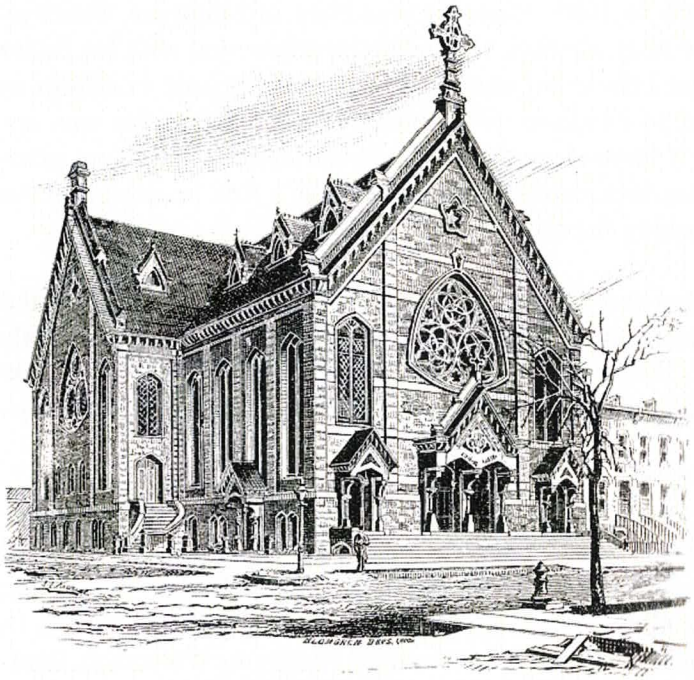
After the war Shipman returned to Madison and was elected city treasurer while supervising the completion of the State Hospital. Newspaper reports document that he designed other "hospitals for the insane" in Mendota and Oshkosh, Wisconsin, and in Illinois at Anna and Elgin. In Wisconsin, Shipman designed the dome of the old State Capitol (1857-1869; replaced by the current structure in 1912).

Three buildings that Shipman designed are listed on the National Register of Historic Places: the American Exchange Bank at 1 N. Pinckney St., which is an Italianate-style commercial block in Madison, Wisconsin; the Putney Block at 301 W. Main St. in Waukesha, Wisconsin, built in 1891; and the Stoughton Universalist Church, an 1858 Greek Revival-style church in Stoughton, Wisconsin. The American Exchange Bank is also a local Madison, Wisconsin, landmark, as is the Willet S. Main Building at 101-105 State St., an Italianate-style structure from 1855-56.

The Willet S. Main Building, built of local sandstone, features a decorative wood cornice with brackets and dentils and is now the oldest-surviving commercial building on Madison's Capitol

**Right: The builder and original owner of the Holden Block, Charles C. P. Holden, was a land agent for the Illinois Central Railroad and a long-time Chicago politician. He was a City of Chicago alderman, City Council President, West Park Commissioner, and Commissioner on the Cook County Board. Bottom left: Just after the 1871 Chicago Fire, Holden took over the First Congregational Church as a Relief Headquarters for fire victims in his capacity as City Council President. Bottom right: A 1924 ad for one of the many furniture companies that occupied the Holden Block over the years.**



FIRST CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH.

MANUFACTURER'S SAMPLE FURNITURE CO.

1968 Milwaukee Ave. Open Mon., Thurs., Sat. Evenings

1027 Madison St. Open Every Evening

*Come a little out of the way and see how much less you pay.*

**Our Greatest October Sale**
**Most Money For Your Dollar**

WE have just received all the samples of fine Parlor Suites from the Comfort Furniture Co.

These have to be sold at once so as to realize cash. This is one of the rarest opportunities ever offered to secure fine Parlor Furniture for less money than can be obtained in any store in the city.

The artists who designed these suites and the craftsmen who built them had in mind the utmost of their profession and they represent *Master Pieces.* Following are some of the values:

Velour Suite, 3 pc., wing chair, small chair and davenport; loose cushions; good value $198.00; specially priced..... **$98.50**

$225 3-piece French Jacquard Velour Suite; wing chair ..... **$159.50**

$900 Silk Brocatelle 3-pc. Suite; Mohair, reversible cushions; carved base; kidney shape; hand tailored..... **$450**

$300 3-piece Mohair Suite; reversible cushions..... **$225**

$250 3-piece Combination Mohair Suite, at..... **$139**

An odd lot of genuine Silk Mohair Wing Chairs and small Chairs; good value at $85.00; specially priced.. **$39.50**

$85.00; specially priced.... A tudor design 7-pc. Combination Walnut Dining Room Set; two-tone table, tapestry seat chairs, slip seats; good value $125.00; specially priced..... **$69.50**

Four-piece Bedroom Set, two-tone walnut, full vanity, 50-inch dresser; dustproof throughout; chifforobe and bow-end bed; a good value at $250 —specially priced for 4 pieces ..... **$169.50**

An odd lot of full sized Vanities and Chifforobes; a good value $65.00; the two pieces specially priced for..... **$50**

Square. The American Exchange Bank, also located on the Square at 1 N. Pinckney, is described as a "beautiful Italianate style building" of local sandstone and "one of the finest Italianate commercial buildings remaining in Madison." It was constructed just a year before the Holden Block, and also features a variety of window styles including similar round-arched windows, segmental arched with crowns, and square topped with large keystones.

The Holden Block was one of Shipman's first projects after moving to Chicago to take advantage of opportunities in the building industry immediately after the 1871 Chicago Fire. Of the known Chicago buildings designed by Shipman, very few survive. The Holden Block is the only Italianate-style commercial structure by Shipman still known to stand. A smaller commercial block with Classical Revival-style details, located at 632 S. Wabash Ave., dates from 1894. A grouping of three Italianate single-family row houses at 2731-2735 W. Warren Boulevard remains from the same period, as well as the Italianate row house at 2014 W. Warren, built next door to his own home (now demolished).

*The Chicago Historic Resources Survey* identifies two other Shipman designs — a row of brick loft structures at 10-20 W. Hubbard Street from 1883, and a large brick/reinforced concrete loft structure at 325 W. Ohio from 1896. Both are utilitarian, industrial loft structures. The Hubbard building was converted to offices by Harry Weese & Associates in 1975.

Two other large commercial loft buildings still standing were built at 570 W. Adams St. in 1888, and at 220 W. Ontario St. in 1884. Shipman also designed the 1888 Presbyterian Hospital on the West Side of Chicago in a fanciful Queen Anne style. Now part of Rush Medical Center, this building has been greatly altered, but some of the original stone ornament remains in place, particularly at the entrance and along the base of the corner tower.

Shipman was married to Mary T. Shipman and had four children, Mrs. J. K. Anderson, Dr. Charles G. Shipman, William V. Shipman, and Miss Cornelia Shipman. At the time of his death at age 80, he was living at 269 (later 2012) Warren Avenue (demolished). He was a member of the Illinois Chapter of the American Institute of Architects and was elected a Fellow in 1887.

## Builder and Owner Charles C. P. Holden

The builder and owner of the Holden Block, Charles C. P. Holden (1827– 1905), was a prominent resident of Chicago serving in many elected and appointed political positions. He was also a land agent throughout Illinois and a real estate developer on Chicago's West Side. Holden was considered one of Chicago's "old settlers."

Holden was born in Groton, New Hampshire, on August 9, 1827, and came with his family to Chicago in 1836 when he was just eight years old. Although his family moved on to Frankfort Township in Will County to farm a 160-acre land claim, Holden returned to Chicago at the age of fifteen to work first as a store clerk at Charles Sweet's grocery on North Water Street and then at the W. W. Barlow book store on Lake Street.

When war was declared with Mexico in 1846, Holden enlisted in Company F of the Fifth Regiment of the Illinois Infantry, spending two years fighting the Navaho Indians in the territory that would become New Mexico. With the negotiation of a peace treaty in 1848, Holden was mustered out and went to California where he worked in the mines and farmed.

After returning to Illinois he began an eighteen-year career with the Illinois Central Railroad in 1855 as a land agent, responsible for disposing of that railroad's state grant of over 2,000,000 acres. He crisscrossed the state investigating unsettled areas, marking out sections of land and arranging sales to settlers and speculators who were searching for sites to start railroad towns. He was instrumental in making several large sales that eventually transformed prairie wilderness into settlements. Among them were 7,000 acres of swampy land in the Calumet region, previously considered worthless, and a 60,000 acre tract along the main line.

A member of the Tenth Ward Republican Club, Holden entered Chicago politics in 1862 when he was first elected as alderman. He later served as President of the Chicago City Council from 1870-1872. During his tenure in the City Council, the city's water system was begun with ground broken for the first tunnel under Lake Michigan on March 17, 1863. A connection to the Sanitary and Ship Canal was also made at Bridgeport in 1871, and Holden was chair of the committee that went to Springfield to lobby the legislature.

As City Council President when the Great Chicago Fire of 1871 struck, he played an important role in organizing relief operations. He and others took possession of the First Congregational Church on Washington Street in the name of the city to establish a Relief Headquarters. They deputized police, set up food service, organized water brigades, and opened schools as temporary shelters. Later, at the request of the Chicago Historical Society, he initiated an investigation of the progress of the Fire and at what times it reached different parts of the city, conducting many personal interviews. A twelve-page summary of his lengthy report was published in A. T. Andreas' *History of Chicago,* an historically important history of the city from 1884.

After his City Council service, Holden was an early commissioner on the West Park Commission, which operated the City's West Side parks and boulevards. In addition, he was elected to the Cook County Board of Commissioners in 1874, becoming its president in 1876. He laid the cornerstone for the 1877 County Courthouse, and during his term the first Cook County Hospital buildings were erected on Harrison Street.

Holden conceived and built the Holden Block as a speculative project, with no particular business tenant in mind. It was an early commercial block to be built on the street, replacing a small cottage. The project was hailed in the *Chicago Tribune* as "a good example to all who contemplate building on Madison Street." Within a year the property had passed out of Holden's ownership.

On September 17, 1855, Charles Holden married Sarah J. Reynolds, granddaughter of Abraham Holderman, an early Northern Illinois pioneer who settled at Holderman's Grove, LaSalle County. They had one child, Sarah J. Holden. His wife Sarah died in 1873, and some years later he married Thelena N. McCoy. He lived at 1387 W. Monroe Street on the Near West Side at the time of his death in 1905, just a few blocks from the Madison property.

## SELECT EARLY TENANTS AND LATER HISTORY OF THE HOLDEN BLOCK

As a real estate agent, Holden built 1027 W. Madison as a speculative property and sold it shortly after its completion in 1873 to George K. Clark. In its early years, the building housed a variety of businesses, mainly dry goods or housekeeping goods stores or "furnishing houses" (a nineteenth-century term for furniture stores). These businesses were in keeping with the eclectic mix of commercial concerns along West Madison Avenue in the late nineteenth century. In 1873, a branch of the Carson & Pirie dry goods store opened their first venture on the West Side in the building, occupying space in the building before expanding into a new location a few blocks away at Peoria Street.

Among the first tenants in the Holden Block was George H. Watson & Co., which sold stoves and hardware. Watson and his partner A. C. Thomas occupied the west side of the building (the old address was 302 W. Madison). Another early tenant in the building was Mannheimer Brothers, a dry-goods store owned by Godfrey, Robert and Emil Mannheimer. The store opened in the east side of the building (the old address was 298-300) around 1874. Three years later, the store was taken over by Godfrey Mannheimer, who moved the business to North Avenue.

In the 1880s the building began to be occupied by stores offering home furnishings. In 1882 F. Cogswell sold furniture suites, carpets, stoves, and crockery from the east section of the building. The Excelsior Furniture Company, owned by dealer Ulick Bourke, moved from 92-94 West Madison Street to the west side of the Holden Block, and remained there through the 1890s. Also known as Ulick Bourke's X-L-C-R Furniture House, it regularly advertised stoves, carpets, parlor suites and bedroom sets. This store was destroyed in the 1894 gas explosion and fire that occurred in the building. At the time of the fire, the E. A. Moore Furniture Company in the east section of the building was not harmed. As late as the 1920s, furniture was still being sold in the Holden Block by the Manufacturer's Sample Furniture Company.

West Madison Street became the "main stem" of a "hobohemian" district in Chicago in the 1910s. Chicago itself had become the "Hobo Capital of America" in the late 19th century as migrant workers rode freight trains to and from large cities looking for transient work. The district began at Madison and the Chicago River to Halsted Street, where cheap restaurants, saloons, and flophouses catered to the needs of this largely white male transient population. By the end of World War II, Madison Street between Halsted and Ashland had become a depressed area known locally as "skid row," catering largely to homeless, indigent, and alcoholic men. It's unclear whether the Holden Block was ever converted to one of the "cubicle" hotels. At the time of a fire in 1954, newspaper reports stated that the building was vacant. Old "Skid Row" buildings began to be torn down for new construction in the 1970s. Despite massive demolition around it, the Holden Block has survived.

The Holden Block was color-coded "orange" in the *Chicago Historic Resources Survey*.

## CRITERIA FOR DESIGNATION

According to the Municipal Code of Chicago (Sec. 2-120-690), the Commission on Chicago Landmarks has the authority to make a final recommendation of landmark designation for an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object if the Commission determines it meets two or more of the stated "criteria for landmark designation," as well as possesses sufficient historic design integrity to convey its significance.

The following should be considered by the Commission on Chicago Landmarks in determining whether to recommend that the Holden Block be designated as a Chicago Landmark.

### *Criterion 1: Value as an Example of City, State or National Heritage*

*Its value as an example of the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social or other aspect of the heritage of the City of Chicago, the State of Illinois or the United States.*

- The Holden Block is the best-surviving commercial block, or commercial loft building, built in the 1870s on Chicago's Near West Side, and one of the best remaining in the city as a whole from this period. The building exemplifies the importance of this once-ubiquitous property type, which lined miles of commercial streets in Chicago in the late nineteenth century, but has since largely been destroyed due to demolition and redevelopment.

- The building is a significant property exemplifying a period of intense commercial and residential development west of the Chicago River immediately after the Chicago Fire of 1871.

### *Criterion 3: Significant Person*

*Its identification with a person or person who significantly contributed to the architectural, cultural, economic, historic, social, or other aspect of the development of the City of Chicago, State of Illinois, or the United States.*

- Charles C. P. Holden, the builder and original owner of the Holden Block, was a historically-significant Chicago politician and public official in the 1860s and 1870s. He was a city alderman from 1862 to 1872. During his tenure, he was closely involved with the expansion of the city's drinking water supply, including the construction of the first water-supply tunnel under Lake Michigan.

- From 1870 to 1872, Holden was also City Council President. He was a prominent public official during the Chicago Fire of 1872, taking charge of the city's relief efforts and later writing a historically-significant account of the Fire and its aftermath.

- Holden was also a pioneering member of the West Parks Commission, which built and operated parks on Chicago's West Side, serving from 1869 to 1878. He served on the Cook County Board of Commissioners from 1874 and became President in 1876.

## *Criterion 4: Exemplary Architecture*

*Its exemplification of an architectural type or style distinguished by innovation, rarity, uniqueness or overall quality of design, detail, materials, or craftsmanship.*

- The Holden Block is a finely-detailed example of a commercial block designed in the Italianate architectural style. Italianate was loosely based on Italian country villas and utilized Classically-inspired ornament in a picturesque manner. The style was extremely popular in the United States in general, and Chicago in particular, between roughly 1860 and 1885. The style, with its visually-lively decoration that could be easily applied to varied property types, was especially important in Chicago for free-standing single-family residences, row houses and commercial loft buildings, such as the Holden Block.

- The building's pale-yellow stone façade, built of Buena Vista sandstone quarried in Ohio, is unusual in the context of surviving Chicago buildings from the 1870s, the heyday of the stone's use in Chicago as a building material.

- The building displays great design skill and craftsmanship in the ornamental quality of its stone façade and window surrounds, which utilize eight different decorative schemes in an exceptionally varied and ornate manner for a relatively modest building.

## *Integrity Criterion*

*The integrity of the proposed landmark must be preserved in light of its location, design, setting, materials, workmanship and ability to express its historic community, architectural or aesthetic interest or value.*

The Holden Block retains its original location, setting, overall structure, and most of its main (street-facing) façade design and materials. The building retains transparent storefronts and a plethora of stone detailing, including decorative stone rustication, highly-ornamental window surrounds, and a stone nameplate giving the date of the building and the original owner's name.

The building over time has lost elements of its main façade, including its original storefronts, historic window sash, and cornice. However, it is common for a nineteenth-century commercial building to lose historic fabric. Historic window sash and cornices often are removed over time, especially for a building as old as the Holden Block. Regardless of these changes, the Holden Block still expresses its original historic community, architectural and aesthetic value, with its existing physical design defining the character of the Italianate-style commercial loft building of the 1870s.

## SIGNIFICANT HISTORICAL AND ARCHITECTURAL FEATURES

Whenever an area, district, place, building, structure, work of art or other object is under consideration for landmark designation, the Commission on Chicago Landmarks is required to identify the "significant historical and architectural features" of the property. This is done to enable the owners and the public to understand which elements are considered most important to preserve the historical and architectural character of the proposed landmark.

Based on its evaluation of the Holden Block, the Commission recommends that the significant features be identified as follows:

- All exterior building elevations, including rooflines, of the building.

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**Illustrations**
*Album of Chicago*: p11 (middle)
Andreas: p18 (top and bottom left)
*Chicago Tribune* newspaper archives: p18 (bottom right)
Historic Preservation Division: p3 (map), p4 (top and middle),p6 (bottom right),
Granacki Historic Consultants: cover, p3, p8-9 (all), p11 (bottom), p13 (top), p15 (all), p16
McAlester: p6 (bottom left)
Saja and Hannibal: p11 (top)
Sanborn Maps: p13
Zukowsky: p4 (bottom), p6 (top)


*The Commission on Chicago Landmarks, whose nine members are appointed by the Mayor and City Council, was established in 1968 by city ordinance. It is responsible for recommending to the City Council that individual buildings, sites, objects, or entire districts be designated as Chicago Landmarks which protects them by law. The Commission is staffed by the Chicago Department of Housing and Economic Development, Historic Preservation Division, 33 North LaSalle Street, Room 1600, Chicago, IL 60602; (312-744-3200) phone; (312-744-2958 (TTY; (312-744-9140) fax. Web site: www.cityofchicago.org/landmarks*

*This Preliminary Summary of Information is subject to possible revision and amendment during the designation process. Only language contained within the final landmark designation ordinance as approved by City Council should be regarded as final.*

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